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<Book Review>Melanie Beresford.  
Vietnam : Politics, Economics and  
Society. London: Pinter Publishers.  
1988, xxi + 242p.

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る。通商政策とそれが密接に関連する工業化政策については、輸入代替型から輸出指向型への移行、タイが NIC に転ずる可能性は工業部門の労働吸収力にかかっていること等が基本的なポイントとして考慮されている。農業開発政策の議論は、第6次計画の最終年（1991年）に対する展望結果をベースに展開されており、多岐にわたる政策提案の前提条件として、国自体の機構改革の必要性が強調されている。最後に、タイ中央銀行スタッフによる金融政策の課題と展望そして実務家的提言から、タイ経済における金融深化の急速な進展状況をまざまざと窺い知ることができる。

本書は、6次にわたる社会・経済計画を軸に、タイ国経済政策の歴史的背景、戦後期の展開、現状と変化の方向をバランスよく理解するのに適した好著である。しいて不満な点をあげるとすれば、財政政策、雇用・労働政策、地域政策など、本書で「直接」取り上げられていないがタイ経済政策の中で重要な位置を占めるとされる政策分野に対する評価と展望であろう。しかし、これらの分野は不完全ながらも関連各章で部分的に言及されているし、重複を避けながら該当章を追加することは必ずしも容易なことではないであろう。本書は、転換期にあるタイ経済の問題点を理解し将来あるべき姿を考える上で、1つの基本的な出発点を与えていると評価しておきたい。なお、編者は、タイの経済政策の特徴として「安定指向」を1つの重要なポイントと考えているように思われるが、この点については評者も全く同感である。評者もタイの経済発展を *slow but steady* と考えている。ただし、*slow* は東アジア NICs と比較しての話である。

（江崎光男・東南ア研）

Melanie Beresford. *Vietnam: Politics, Economics and Society*. London: Pinter Publishers, 1988, xxi+242 p.

This is one of the books which have been published in Marxist Regimes Series with Bogdan Szajkowski as general editor. The scholars on Southeast Asia might find the books on Laos

and Kampuchea also interesting.

Beresford's book on Vietnam give a good introduction to the country for social scientists interested in contemporary Vietnam. It consists of five parts (history and political traditions; the social system; the political system; the economy; and the regime's policies) and gives the roughly same weight to each of these parts (though the part on the social system is somewhat shorter). In general, the book is well written and documented. For those who are interested in further reading, there is a bibliography at the end of the volume. Since writings on Vietnam are scattered and many of these were written in relation to American involvement in Vietnam, it had been difficult to get a detached view of contemporary Vietnam before this book appeared. Before a similar book appears, it will serve as the introductory text to contemporary Vietnam.

To write a good introductory book on a country is difficult. First, the author has to be familiar with the literature and has to have necessary factual data. For countries like Vietnam on which information is scanty, to obtain relevant factual information alone is a difficult task. But a good introductory text has to go beyond that. The author has to have either a theoretical framework or a comparative framework to process his information. Otherwise, the book ends up as a fact book, and fails to give insight to the structure, processes, and problems of the country.

Ms. Beresford must have been in contact with scholars interested in other socialist regimes or communist movements in other countries, for here and there, she throws in comparative analyses. But some of her comparative analyses are weak. For example, in discussing why the communist movement succeeded in Vietnam but failed in Thailand (pp. 209-210), she brushes aside the fact that Thailand was an independent

country as a minor factor and gives the more developed division of labor as the major explanation. But one can easily argue that because Thailand remained as an independent country and therefore developed indigenous institutions, these could sustain and interact more smoothly with economic development, therefore enhance the social division of labor. Although the fact that Thailand was independent may not have been the immediate cause of the failure of the Thai Communist Party, it seems to have been an important indirect, given factor one must take into account when discussing the failure.

The author argues that the Army is under the control of the Vietnamese Communist Party and implies that it is not obstructing the economic reform the Party is trying to promote. However, *prima facie*, one can argue that the major stumbling block for economic liberalization in Vietnam is the Army. As the author argues, there may be no split between the Party and the Army, but to prevent this, it can be argued, the Party cannot push economic liberalization much. A large number of soldiers died or were maimed during the war, and the Army must feel responsible to them and their families. And there are still a large number of soldiers and reservists. These people are supported by resorting to nonmarket mechanisms. The Army which loses all these with economic liberalization cannot be neutral. If it is not a obstructionist factor, why this is so should be more convincingly explained than done in the book.

One basic question concerning Vietnam is why the economy is doing so poorly. Looking at the history of the country and the region, one gets an impression that it has the best potential for development. As the author ex-

plains, despite the poor economic performance vis-a-vis the neighboring countries, Vietnam has a high education level for a developing country (p. 179). The author argues that the Vietnamese Communist Party is responsive to the needs of the people (p. 119, for example), but if so, why is its economic performance so miserable? Or does she argue that it is what the people want? If it is not, despite the human potential, why is Vietnam's economic performance so poor?

The author might say that the incorporation of capitalist South created unprecedented problems. But why? In a few years after South Vietnam was liberated, there were no more private firms where there was a concentration of capital. Small capitalists, she might argue, have been obstructing the socialization of the former South Vietnam, and this created enormous problems for the Communist Party. But doesn't economic liberalization mean that small capitalists are accepted? At least, this is the direction in which China and some other socialist countries are going, and it is the only way in which economic reforms can have any uplifting effects on the economy. Isn't this policy (and its full implementation) difficult in Vietnam, because of "the backwardness" of the Vietnamese Communist Party? Why then is it so "backward"? Here again, the strength of the Army seems relevant. Although it was a crucially important institution in bringing about national integration, in the peacetime, it seems to have become a dragging factor. In a way, Vietnam seems to be the victim of its own success. This sort of problem-oriented questions is not well answered in the book.

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